

proceed to designate the Clarion River despite the fact that the wild and scenic river study that this House authorized in the 102d Congress has not been completed. However, we had favorable testimony on this proposal from the administration, the bill's sponsor, and the local community. That being the case we will not object H.R. 3568, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. CLINGER], the author of the legislation.

Mr. CLINGER. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to stand here today and to rise in support of H.R. 3568—a bill to designate 51.7 miles of the Clarion River—located in Pennsylvania—as part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

This effort started 4 years ago when the Clarion River became eligible for study by direction of Public Law 102-271 which conveyed a wild and scenic designation upon the Allegheny River.

In March of this year, the Forest Service determined after lengthy analysis that 51.7 miles of the Clarion River contain outstanding scenic and recreational values of regional significance. Mr. Speaker, while I do not share the professional expertise of those who made this determination, I can attest to the fact that the eligible corridor is indeed a natural and beautiful environmental treasure.

The Clarion River corridor is located in the unglaciated Allegheny plateau, is free flowing and relatively slow moving. For that reason, more than 130,000 people have floated on the Clarion River in 1995. In fact, one of my staff members had the opportunity to float the river this summer during celebration of Pennsylvania Rivers Month during which the Clarion River was recognized.

Apart from the Clarion River's recreational value—which winds its way through the Allegheny National Forest—its hallmark is its beauty and serenity. I strongly believe that such a unique natural resource—especially in the eastern United States—should be preserved and protected for the enjoyment of this and future generations.

And judging from the communication that I have had with the residents of the area over the past 4 years, they overwhelmingly agree. During hearings on H.R. 3568 before Chairman HANSEN's Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Lands, we heard positive testimony from two residents of the Clarion area—one private landowner and one travel and tourism representative.

The testimony of Ms. Kimberly Miller, a landowner herself and a self-described caretaker of the land, was especially important considering her property along the corridor has been in family ownership since 1883.

Another Pennsylvania resident came to the Capitol for the hearing last July

to tell the subcommittee about the economic benefit that will follow designation of the corridor. Mr. David Morris, executive director of a regional visitors bureau, stated that according to the U.S. Travel Data Center, more than \$127 million are spent annually by visitors to the Clarion area. This translates into some 1,700 jobs and over \$3 million in local tax receipts—jobs and revenue that might well be lost in the future if the extraordinary recreational values of the river became degraded.

Despite the many positive comments I received about H.R. 3568, and the outpouring of public support that fueled this effort from the start, that's not to say reservations have not been voiced, but the critics have been few and largely limited to those who oppose any designation under the act on philosophical grounds.

It has been my goal since the inception of this project to maintain an open dialog with any and all interested parties. Pending passage of this measure, drafting of the management plan for the river will be developed with the same goal in mind: to achieve consensus among local, State, and Federal agencies along with the interests of private citizens.

I believe it's important to note that H.R. 3568 does not contain any unfunded mandates; does not permit the Government to acquire land through condemnation since more than 50 percent of the land is publicly owned; and would merely require the continuation of a requirement to submit new permit applications for projects on public lands to be reviewed by the responsible State or Federal agency. This has already been the case since 1992.

Mr. Speaker, I want to very gratefully thank all of my Pennsylvania colleagues—Republican and Democrat—who lent their support to this effort, including 15 Pennsylvania House Members and both of our Members from the other body—who introduced companion legislation in the Senate. Their cosponsorship is testimony to the fact that preservation of our national resources is an issue that knows no boundaries—congressional or otherwise.

I believe the words spoken by one of my constituents best capture the sentiment and commitment by residents to see the successful conclusion of this effort, as part of our national infrastructure, this employer will not relocate for warmer weather or for less expensive labor as some other industries have done. The Clarion is part of us and is here as long as we are.

So, Mr. Speaker, in the waning days of the 104th Congress—which brings to a close my career as a Member of this House—it's a great opportunity to consider and pass this legislation which means so much to the people who have sent me back to Washington for the past 18 years. While I have been fortunate to guide many very important reform measures through the House this year, H.R. 3568 allowed me to work hand in hand with the citizens who are

passionate about preserving our local resources for the benefit of fellow Pennsylvanians and all Americans.

With that, I want to thank Chairman YOUNG and Chairman HANSEN for their support over the past months in bringing this measure to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I also express my appreciation to the gentleman from American Samoa for his willingness to also support the legislation.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I certainly would like to commend the gentleman from Pennsylvania who is the chief sponsor of this legislation and am most appreciative of his comments. We do not have any additional speakers, but I want to say to the gentleman from Pennsylvania that hopefully sometime in the future I look forward to visiting the Clarion Wild River and perhaps even asking other Members.

I can say also to the gentleman from Pennsylvania, we have a very sensitive appreciation of what it means to try to pass legislation for not 1 year, not for 2 years, 3 years, but for 4 years. Sometimes our friends from downtown are not exactly very cooperative of some of the things that we here as Members have tried to do in formulating pieces of legislation.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I want to commend again the gentleman from Pennsylvania for bringing this piece of legislation to the floor and having the sense of bipartisanship and support of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah [Mr. HANSEN] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3568.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 2200

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURTON of Indiana). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

WEKIVA RIVER, SEMINOLE CREEK, AND ROCK SPRINGS RUN, FL, NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS SYSTEM STUDY

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill